



2021 Big Ten Baseball Game Management Manual – Addendum

FEBRUARY 26, 2021 UPDATE

THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE UPDATED AS NECESSARY THROUGHOUT THE SEASON

The following policies apply to Big Ten Baseball games during the 2021 regular season. Should a host institution be faced with a unique scenario preventing any of the below policies, alternate solutions shall be developed in concert with the Big Ten Conference office.

1. General

- As approved by the Administrators Council, the 2021 baseball travel squad limit shall be increased to 32 student-athletes
- Home and visiting team band, cheer/spirit squads and mascots are prohibited from attending home or road games during the 2020-21 season
- Game tickets shall only be made available to family members of student-athletes, coaches and baseball staff members
- MLB scouts may attend games at institutional discretion as determined by state/local health guidelines and in-venue attendance permissibility
- To the greatest extent possible, all persons outside of the team dugout area shall adhere to state/local health guidelines by maintaining adequate social distancing and wearing a facial covering/mask/gaiter at all times

2. Medical

- Each institution shall designate a Chief Infection Officer (CInO) who shall oversee collection and reporting of data for the Big Ten Conference

- Healthcare providers have the unchallengeable medical authority to make decisions to alter or halt practice and competition.

Disinfection / Sanitization

- Home institutions are required to disinfect / sanitize home and visiting team spaces prior to each game using EPA-approved disinfectants and all disinfected areas should be locked down between the time of final disinfection and the arrival of the teams, game officials and other essential personnel who utilize those spaces
- Once the home and visiting team have accessed their respective team spaces, only Tier 1 and Tier 2 individuals are allowed to access those spaces during pregame, in-game and postgame time frames
 - Home and visiting team spaces include:
 - Team dugouts
 - Locker rooms (main locker room and any auxiliary spaces used)
 - Additional spaces to be considered for disinfection / sanitization include:
 - Bullpens
 - Batting cages
 - Bat Testing location
 - Game officials' locker room(s)
- Following the departure of the visiting team from the facility, the home institution will enter the visiting team locker rooms to disinfect between games
- Host institutions shall make every effort to provide appropriate sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer and additional sanitizing products within the spaces identified above

Face Coverings / Masks / Gaiters

- All Tier 1 and Tier 2 individuals working directly with student-athletes are required to wear a face covering/mask/gaiter at all times
- Face shields shall not be used as a suitable replacement for a face covering/mask/gaiter for coaches, staff and non-participating¹ student-athletes
- Game officials and individuals who have working responsibilities within the team dugout area or immediately adjacent to the team dugout area shall be required to wear a face covering/mask/gaiter at all times

¹Non-Participating shall mean student-athletes who are not dressed for competition that day

- Additional individuals entering the stadium for any reason, including TV personnel, shall be required to remain physically distanced from the team dugout and must wear a face covering/mask/gaiter at all times
- Bus drivers and team specific security shall be required to wear masks/face coverings at all times when interacting with Tier 1 and Tier 2 personnel and shall be required to remain physically distanced, to the extent practicable

Tier 2 Protocols

- Any individuals interacting with the team on the field and/or in the locker room on gamedays must be tested as part of the Tier 1 or Tier 2 congregate group and be tested a minimum of each day of competition
- A Tier 2 individual must be tested the day prior to gameday if they will have direct contact with the Tier 1 Group
- Institutions have the discretion to determine the essential personnel who should be included in the Tier 2 testing category and shall limit the number of individuals included in Tier 2 in order to reduce the direct or indirect contact with the Tier 1 congregate group
 - Examples of essential employees who may be included in the Tier 2 testing group:
 - Additional Athletic Trainers/Team Physicians/Medical Staff not in Tier 1
 - Game management and facility operations staff
 - Grounds crews
 - Additional equipment managers not in Tier 1
 - Athletic administration representatives (e.g., AD, sport admin.)
 - Baseball Operations/Baseball Administration employees not in Tier 1
 - Video/social media personnel
 - The following individuals shall not be included in the Tier 2 testing group:
 - Donors, alumni, former student-athletes
 - Sponsors
 - Third-party vendors
 - MLB Scouts
 - Athletic Department staff members who do not serve a working purpose on gameday
 - TV personnel (defer to individual network guidelines)
 - Institution staff members (see notes below regarding other testing for institutional representatives and staff)
 - Xray Techs, Neurosurgeon, Airway physician, Field paramedics, Cardiologist, Visiting team liaison (ATs/ortho senior resident/PC fellow/etc.)

- Flight attendants, hotel staff and other travel personnel
 - Bus drivers shall be left to the discretion of each institution
- Tier 2 personnel who are cleared to work the game following gameday testing will be required to have a wristband, credential, lanyard or other item that signifies their status as a Tier 2 individual with access to the field and locker room spaces
- For away team travel, any institutional representative who will be traveling on the same flight or bus with any member of the Tier 1 congregate group shall be tested on the day of travel prior to departure and on the day of the game
- Institutional staff members who travel separately from the team travel party are not required to test prior to travel. If these individuals must interact with the Tier 1 or Tier 2 congregate groups on gameday, before any such interactions, they shall be tested on gameday as part of the Tier 2 group

Dugout Considerations

- Equipment and athletic training staffs must periodically clean/disinfect benches, chairs, bullpen, batting cages, bat testing equipment, Gatorade carts, hard surfaces, and any other equipment, to the extent practicable

3. Rescheduling Policies and Procedures

- Teams will make all efforts to utilize the rescheduling opportunities currently outlined in the game management manuals and bylaws
- During pod play, teams will be permitted to join other pods should there be mutual agreement between institutions
- Teams may consider rescheduling games to a weekday should there be minimal budget and academic impact (i.e. regional opponent) and both institutions mutually agree
- If two teams experience cancelled games earlier in the season, teams may mutually agree to alter a three-game series to a four-game series (over three days) to maximize playing opportunities

4. Gameday Rules and Regulations

- Games shall consist of nine (9) innings for all pod play and three-game series

- If a doubleheader occurs on the last day of a series, the first game will be seven (7) innings and the second game will be nine (9)
- In a four-game series, the first game of a doubleheader will be seven (7) innings. If the first game of the doubleheader goes into two (2) or more extra innings then the second game of a doubleheader will be seven (7) innings
- On doubleheader days of a four-game series, a game may be stopped after seven (7) innings if one team is ahead by at least ten (10) runs
- Pod play template (4 day)
 - Friday – Team A/Host Team
 - Saturday – Team A/Host Team (game 1); Team A/Team B (game 2)
 - Sunday – Team B/Team A (game 1); Team B/Host Team (game 2)
 - Monday – Team B/Host Team
 - Home team is listed second

5. Conference Standings, Tiebreakers and Automatic Qualifier

- All games competed during the 2021 season will be counted towards the conference standings
- Teams must be within 75% of the average number of contests completed across the league in the 2021 season to be eligible for the Big Ten regular season championship title
 - If a team is below the 75% threshold, losses will be added until that threshold is reached and then winning percentage will be utilized to determine the conference champion and AQ
- The regular season champion will be awarded the NCAA automatic qualification berth and will be determined by the best winning percentage of games played during the regular season Conference schedule
- In the event of a tie for the regular season championship, the following tiebreaker shall be used to determine the automatic qualifier:
 - Head-to-head Conference game results amongst the tied teams
 - Each team's record versus common opponents
 - Each team's record versus the six (6) teams in the highest position in the standings

Note: If there is a tie for 6th place, all teams in the tie will be included in the tiebreaking calculations

- Coin flip
- All other ties shall stand

6. Officiating

- NCAA testing protocols for baseball officials will serve as the minimum standard for the 2021 season
 - Standards include masking for all officials
 - Due to officials rotating throughout a series, all umpires must receive a PCR test within three days before the first schedule competition or antigen test each day of competition
 - Institutions may choose to enhance the testing policies as recommended by institutional medical personnel and local health departments
- A three-person crew rotation shall be used for umpiring Conference games
- All officiating personnel must be masked when entering the stadium and for duration of game
- Officials shall be responsible for transporting themselves to the stadium
- Officials shall have dedicated locker room access but shall not use shower facilities

7. Game Management

Credentials

- Big Ten All-Access credentials shall be eliminated

Game Operations

- In-house videoboard crews building access will be handled at institutional discretion

- Practice space availability for visiting team(s) shall be at the discretion of the host institution if the host is able to offer practice space in a safe and responsible manner
- Postgame handshakes between the two teams shall be eliminated
- Postgame friends and family area for the visiting team shall be eliminated

Artificial Crowd Noise Policy

- In an effort to replicate a typical game day atmosphere, Big Ten host institutions are permitted to implement artificial crowd noise (murmurs, dynamic reactions, etc.) at their discretion. The murmur track should be set no higher than 70dbs at Field Level
- In the event of a big play (i.e. scoring plays, home runs, strikeouts, double plays, etc), the artificial crowd noise may be elevated to a maximum of 90dbs for no more than 7 seconds if play continues. Following the elevation of artificial noise, the decibel level must return to the present gameday level not exceeding 70dbs
- Artificial crowd noise (murmur) shall be turned on by first pitch and remain on for the entirety of the game. Crowd noise may be turned off at school discretion during breaks (including injury timeouts, inning breaks and commercial breaks).
- Home institutions are permitted to use piped-in music, recorded band audio, PA and other sound effects, provided that all non crowd noise audio stops once the batter steps into the batter's box.

8. TV Network Partners

- Camera operators and other essential personnel (as determined by the televising network in consultation with the host institution and the Conference) shall have access to field level. These individuals must wear a face covering/mask/gaiter at all times and must remain physically distant from the team dugout area and any Tier 1 or Tier 2 personnel, to the extent practicable
- Requests for additional camera positions or any additional production enhancements determined on site by the televising network are up to the approval and discretion of the host institution. Please notify the Conference office if any concerns arise involving these requests
- Requests to access home or visiting team areas (e.g., team locker rooms) by TV networks will be up to the discretion of each institution. Once those team

areas have been disinfected/sanitized prior to the arrival of the home and visiting teams, no access shall be provided to non-Tier 1 or Tier 2 personnel

- TV personnel shall be required to follow guidelines established by parent companies regarding testing protocols and other health and safety related issues. The Conference is not requiring any additional protocols for the TV partners beyond the face covering/mask/gaiter and physical distancing requirements as described above

9. Communications

- All materials shall be made available digitally for the season, with only a limited number of printed line-ups, stats, etc., made available to TV/radio broadcasters if requested ahead of game day
- Each institution shall provide the visiting team with the printed line-ups in the locker room and final stat packets
- Big Ten communications directors will be expected to identify their team's preferred number of copies and share that information with the hosts 2-3 days prior to each game

Press Box Seating

- A minimum of 25% of total seats available to the media shall be made available to visiting school communications staff members and visiting media
 - Visiting team communications contacts and team videographers are included in the 25%
 - Should space allow, the host institution will assign additional spaces as available
- Big Ten Communication Directors will collect information from their local media members who intend to travel for upcoming road trips and share that information with the host institution 10-14 days ahead of each road game

Field-Level Access

- The host institution will reserve space for at least one photographer and one videographer from the visiting institution
 - The host institution photographer(s) will serve in a pool capacity for the visiting team as needed
 - School photographers and videographers should anticipate having limited movement around the stadium during the game

- Host institution videoboard videographer access shall be handled at institutional discretion, so long as state/local health guidelines and aforementioned conference testing protocols are adhered to

Postgame Availabilities

- Postgame interview shall be conducted remotely via Zoom or similar service
- Each institution will provide their own Zoom link to the media and their team
- Visiting institutions will request assistance with equipment or support from the host institution in advance of traveling to the series
- Links to postgame availabilities shall be distributed to media in attendance for the game, as well as those not in attendance
- Availabilities shall be recorded, with video distributed to the same groups afterwards